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Focus

Monica Furlong

I wonder if we have yet begun to see what religious journalism is about; whether there exists a paper or journal or magazine anywhere in the world that manages to unite good religion with good journalism and make the two marry sweetly and fruitfully. I am inclined to think not.

I can see why such a conjugal felicity hasn't occurred. There is a striking incompatibility between Christianity and journalism and all the publications which we already have tend to take sides with one or the other. If, for example, an editor bases his hopes on a popular appeal, concentrating on photographs, a tabloid format and short sentences, then the richness and subtlety of the Christian faith tends to be diluted and its ethical flavour (being the easiest aspect of it to explain to unbelievers) to obscure everything else. If, on the other hand, the editor puts his shirt on an intellectual readership, then the huge concessions journalism makes to its readers are not going to be granted. I am not intending to imply that these extremes are not useful. On the contrary they fill a need, though the first kind will never give its readers a complete and integrated view of Christianity, and the second kind will never enjoy a large readership. The first kind, however, may be the necessary bottle-feeding in the Word for the semi-literate reader, and the second kind a valuable source of nourishment to Christians of exceptional intellectual ability. (Being a highly intelligent Christian can be a desperately lonely business.) But this is still not the marriage (or armed truce) between religion and journalism which some of us would like to see.

The real interest lies elsewhere in the numerous publications which teeter between the two extremes, swallowing a jorum of journalism one week and a nice big dose of religion the next, but never quite daring to mix the two in case the whole exercise finishes in a bilious attack. Journalism is the vulgar nostrum many Christians would rather dispense with altogether save for the fact that it has got a knack of selling papers and curing deficits. Religion is the pure wine of existence which we would much prefer to keep untainted by this association except that like all good things it needs all the bush it can get, human taste being naturally bad, and human palates notoriously undiscerning.

But having discovered that it needs journalism the Church still keeps it firmly in its place. Journalism's chief sin probably is that it does not conform to academic standards of writing. It does not present equal facts equally, it uses emphasis entertainingly but unfairly, it revels in sensation, shock, and scandal, and it has no

scruples so long as it is read. Fear of libel actions is the only discipline it accepts or understands. It has an incurable passion for stripping Jack naked whatever the weather and it will uncover some monstrous national scandal or some pitiful private tragedy with blind indifference. The best journalism is extrovert, extravagant, and witty and carries an edge so sharp that it is one of the deadliest weapons a a community can possess. In a sick community such as Nazi Germany or South Africa it is also one of the most precious.

It is a restless bedfellow for Christians, though. Humility, temperance, meekness, peace, courtesy, gentleness, fairmindness and love are a world away from the supreme Fleet Street virtue of "stirring it up", and there are times when it seems useless for the Church to attempt anything more vigorous than the insipid stuff which passes for Christian journalism at the moment. There is a genuine dilemma here, but one we badly need to solve, not only because the Church needs the technical know-how of journalism to get its ideas across, but because at the present moment journalism has an enormous amount to teach the Church about pungency, virility and even about honesty.

For gentility long ago settled over Christianity like a blight and it became abominably difficult for any of us to escape from its mildewing touch. With gentility came inhibition and with inhibition came a decline of courage. Christians became less and less willing to face trouble, and got more and more out of the habit of saying in simple, clear language what they thought about the conduct of others. The word "reconciliation" appeared ominously in official pronouncements and continues to do so, and we became much too good at the ancient art of crying peace where there is no peace. Kindness came down on wit and plain-speaking like a suffocating blanket, bringing with it a pathetic sensitivity to criticism, and it became less permissible to have one's fun at the expense of famous clerics and other well-known men in public than to denigrate them cruelly behind their backs. (But *all* great ones must put up with being laughed at. It is our privilege to laugh as much as it is theirs to rule our lives.) The deadening emotion of "respect for the Cloth" which has always been more noticeable among pagans than among Christians has finally washed over our own door-step in a wave of pomposity. We need desperately, so far as we can manage it with our present acute shortage of wit, to let in a breeze of wholesome irreverence.

We need to learn plain-speaking, to enjoy controversy (without descending to fanatical raving), to talk naturally of what we think and feel (and not of what Christians ought to think and feel).

> "If we are to cut any ice," wrote Dietrich Bonhoeffer, "we must move out into the air of intellectual discussion and risk shocking people."

We need to be a bouncing, impertinent and daring Church much

more than we need to be a sedate, polite and prudent one. Which is why journalism, with its flair for irreverence, has so much to teach us. Journalism, perhaps more than any of our contemporaries, can show us how to get on with the job we were designed to do.

Christian Journalism

ROSAMUND ESSEX

Who has just retired from the editorship of the CHURCH TIMES

Christian journalism is the dickens of a job. I have been in it for thirty years, so I ought to know. It is not that Christian journalism lacks purpose, power or pep. It is, indeed, part of the Church's propaganda in the very best sense of the word: for a *good* religious journal is the most wonderful instrument in the hand of the Church for making its aims and its work properly known.

There the crux is already revealed. What is a good religious journal? Most editors, like me, would shake their heads and say they only wish they knew—always adding—as I certainly should!—the paper they themselves serve comes nearer to the ideal which this imperfect world allows.

The trouble with religious newspapers is the diversity of clients whom it has to serve. Nearly all Christian journals in England today are run, not by official Church bodies, but by individual commercial firms. They are none the worse for that: in my view they are far the better for it. For official bodies are apt to be cautious, unimaginative, a little pompous and not a little dull. And the first and last Commandment of journalism—the supreme Commandment of all—is Thou shalt not be *dull*.

But to return. Each firm owning each paper aims to build up a big circulation. And that means being bought by the largest possible clientèle. Christians, however, are not a compact body in the community. They come from every stratum of society. A Church newspaper has to be interesting to priests (of course), to professional men and doctors, schoolmasters, lawyers and actors: to women who are nurses and almoners, milliners and models: to artizans and tradesmen: to charladies and labourers. And I can assure my readers that somebody of all these classes is found to purchase a Church paper. How can their needs be supplied? Does one aim at the clergy, who after all can be a paper's most wonderful selling

agent? Does one opt for a fairly high intellectual level, because, nowadays, the Church appeals mainly to the educated middle-class?

A news writer on the staff of *The Times*, I think it was, who was advised by a senior, was told:

> "Remember, you are writing not for the highbrow, who is in the minority in England, but for the widow in Eastbourne who has a cat. You have to compete with the cat for her interest. It is just as simple as that. She can't read a sentence of more than twenty words, nor understand a word of more than three syllables. So write accordingly."

He was probably right. Anyway I have always borne it in mind.

But it is not only the diversity of clientèle that matters, but the variety of journalism. A religious paper must inform, instruct, edify, lead, support, criticise, and arouse. (It would be lamentable if religious people forgot to laugh, in the nicest possible way.) The paper must be Theological and beware of heresy. It must keep a sharp eye on politics and shun even the shadow of libel. It must produce sermons and meditations, special articles on the Church's activities, leading articles, book reviews and above all, news. For it is a *news*paper, and news comes first. The religious paper is the storehouse from which religious history is gleaned. One part of a great Church cannot thrive without news of the other parts: and news of the successes of a forward-moving parish may hearten another parish in the doldrums.

This enormous coverage cannot be attempted, let alone achieved by a religious paper today, with paper prices so high that the size of each issue must seriously be curtailed from the ideal size, and that is the problem of all religious editors and proprietors.

Sometimes the problem is solved by sending out a questionnaire to readers, so some conspectus of its constituent parts may be discovered, as well as readers' particular predilections. The *Church Times* issued such a questionnaire in 1957, and thereafter for some six months clerical workers were sorting, reading and classifying mountains of replies.

There was a certain amount of agreement about the most popular parts of the paper, and by far and away the most attractive page was the front page, giving as it does the news of the Church to the Church. Next came the "Summary of the Week", which comments on home and foreign politics and outstanding Church events. Here the diversity of readers' views broke out, and was spattered over the remaining answers of the questionnaire. Readers thought the paper too Conservative: too Socialist: too indeterminate. It was considered High Church to the point of Romanising: and Protestant to the point of betrayal. It was hailed as a Catholic bulwark, and an enjoyment for Evangelicals. Its style was described as superb, pompous, intellectual, blimpish and puerile.

Housewives, by the way, came high up in the professional break-

down of readership, where priests, teachers and doctors were plainly likely to predominate. And among the more unusual professions in those who answered the questionnaire (only a tiny proportion of the whole readership of course), there was one inventor, four opticians, three stationmasters, five tailors, three 'bus-conductors, one trade union official, four zoologists and one undertaker.

Now I see that the *Catholic Times* has issued a questionnaire of its own—the paper has just changed hands and no doubt the new proprietor will want to know just where he is with his readers. I hazard the answers will more often than not cancel themselves out. The paper wants to know whether its reader is married or single? is a convert? keeps a cat, dog or bird or an unusual animal? has travelled? lives in town or country? reads more than one (Roman) Catholic paper? (A nasty one, this, for English Churchmen who mostly don't read even one), buys his paper at a newsagent or in a church? Then there are queries about news versus magazine features; advertisements, correspondence. There is the usual question as to which daily paper the reader reads: for here is the quickest possible method of finding out a lot of answers in a portmanteau way. I confess it would never have occurred to me to inquire about queer pets. I wonder what difference it makes to the *Catholic Times* if one keeps an alligator in the drawing room?

In two ways it is far easier for the Roman Catholic paper to gain a big circulation because its sale is made a matter of conscience and is stimulated by the parish priest: the world coverage of news is larger; and the diversity of religious opinion is much smaller.

Taken by and large Anglican Church newspapers depend on a nice blending of news and views in special articles; the Roman Catholic papers have more news in the form of popular stories (accounts of miracles at Lourdes and so on are a help); the Free Church papers rely to a far greater extent on the magazine type of paper, with pictures of fields and flowers, and with longer sermons and extended devotional writings.

WHAT EVERY EDITOR of whatever paper belonging to whatever allegiance finds is the absorption of his readers in matters which are plain trivial and plain controversial, rather than on things that appertain most strongly to the Kingdom of Heaven now and hereafter. In the past the interest of the religious reader was in bitter controversy and, judging from the old numbers of Christian journals of every kind, he would be satisfied with no articles except those written by pens dipped in gall. No conviction was any good unless it was barbed with offensive spikes; no lead given was considered effective unless it ground some opponent to smithereens or rubbed some reputation in the dust. Only the other day, I was reading a letter sent to a proprietor by a retiring editor of one of the Church newspapers forty years ago, in which he confessed that he was "glad to be out of the ecclesiastical dogfight". He was speaking of

the dogfight within the Church itself. But besides that, there was the added bombardment of one Christian communion by another, carried on sometimes by libellous charges, sometimes by hurtful jeers, sometimes by sneering innuendoes.

Any journalist on a religious paper who has been on the job as long as I have will know the sadness of meeting over and over again with this concentration on the readers' part on controversy or triviality. In the Roman Catholic papers, the correspondence columns are often marred by letters from those who once belonged to, and loved, the Church of England, and now cannot hasten too fast to malign her. In the Free Church papers correspondents are often censorious about evils that never found any condemnation in the Bible. And in Church of England papers the words "ceremonial" or "vestments" have only to be mentioned to produce a pile of correspondence.

> "If we write about Christ's poor who can't get jobs", wrote the famous journalist Sidney Dark at the time of the Great Unemployment in the thirties, "no one so much as puts pen to paper to encourage or advise. But if some one starts the subject of the width of a chasuble's hem, readers go mad to get their views in print."

I have set out purposefully to look at religious journal and journalism critically for that does no harm to truth. But no such article could be complete without the other side of the picture. Journalism in the Church has a wonderful scope for disseminating news, for teaching, for evangelism, and for fortifying in the faith. Week after week a paper comes out that can affect thousands upon thousands of people who imbibe a faith, a philosophy, a way of life almost without knowing that they are doing it. If the paper is a bulwark to the Church, the people who read it will grow to be so too. That is why the highest standards must be kept in the Church papers, the finest ideals and the strongest belief—something that is never easy in a profession that tends to sensationalism and cynicism.

The Church press has had a great past, for all its minor defects, and has before it a bright and responsible future, for all the difficulties that lie in the way. It is a two-way responsibility shared as well by those who write as by those who read. In 1863 when the *Church Times* was founded the first leader concluded with these words:

> "These are our principles and while asking the Blessing of Almighty God upon our efforts, we earnestly call on all those glorying in the name of English Churchmen to do their part in this work."

How could one say fairer today?

Can Publicity Help the Church?

JOHN MURPHY

Associate Director of one of the biggest and best of London's advertising agencies.

There is no great difference between selling ideas and selling goods. You use ideas to sell goods, you also use ideas to sell ideas.

There are two prerequisites. One, that you should be quite clear what idea you want to sell. The second is that it should be a good idea (in selling terms).

The object of any selling or persuasion is either to create a state of mind or to cause action.

If the Church of England is quite clear what state of mind it wishes to create and/or what action to cause, then publicity *can* help it. If you ask me to prove this then of course I can't. I must simply fall back on the evidence of experience which shows that ideas can be "sold". Political propaganda is an obvious example.

The Church of England has never used modern publicity. There have been flirtations, but these have never led to an evangelistic campaign on a sustained scale.

As a professional I find this interesting, and am curious to know the reasons. Two spring to mind:

(i) The Church is *not* clear about the objects;
(ii) Publicity is thought of as immoral, even unchristian.

Let us take No. 2 first.

Publicity is not immoral or unchristian in itself. It is only the way in which it is used that admits of praise or blame. In itself it is neutral. It is a vehicle or a technique. It does not choose either its own ends or the means to achieve them.

Critics of publicity often say that it may help to achieve a good end but that the means used to do so are wrong, misleading, fraudulent, vulgar. In any particular case this may be true. As a general statement it is pure baloney.

When a publicist accepts a client he accepts the ends the client desires to achieve. (He doesn't of course have to accept the client). The means he uses to achieve his client's ends are conditioned by them. If the client is a manufacturer whose end is mere profit the means he uses are whatever will gain this end, subject both to legal sanctions and to public opinion.

The kind of safeguards which the public enjoys are that:

(a) Telling lies or gross exaggeration, etc., doesn't pay off in the end.
(b) The State and media owners have set up strict codes of standards.
(c) The client and the publicist's private morals are likely to act as a check.

If the client is the Church then the publicist must accept the Church's end, and the means he uses to give it are conditional in exactly the same way.

Since the Church is an evangelistic church it presumably wishes to inform, to teach, to persuade. There is no inherent reason to prevent the Church using the techniques of modern mass communications to do so.

It is true that the effective propaganda of ideas is in ratio to their simplicity. Publicity, to communicate, must be simple. There is a danger of oversimplifying if the idea to be communicated is very complex. But it is only a danger, not an inevitable result. But even the best publicist is unable to carry out his craft if the client does not know what he wants to do.

What does the Church want to communicate? Does it want to present the Gospel of Christ, to make people more religious? Or does it want to persuade people to join the Church and come to Church? The first would be the creation of a state of mind; the second the causing of an action. The Church might, of course, want to do both.

The enormous variations of public theological message expressed in churches, and the wide freedom given to individual clergy to express private opinions about both religious and secular matters, are no help to anyone trying to find out.

This richness of tenet has great drawbacks when it comes to deciding what message to communicate. This cannot be insuperable: it is in any case up to the Church to crystallize its message and decide for itself—that is if it wants to reach out and communicate with simple people. Otherwise it will find it is merely talking to itself.

The publicist could not decide, nor would he wish to, the message to be conveyed. All that his expertise could do would be to tell the Church whether the message it had decided upon can be communicated and if so how it can best be done.

Assuming the "what" let us discuss the "how". There are two ways of going about this:

(a) Paid advertising;
(b) Public relations/publicity.

An effective national advertising campaign costs about £100,000 in newspapers and magazines. It costs about £200,000 to get the

same "coverage" on television. The difference may be justified in terms of impact. (These are of course, annual figures—and it is reasonable to assume that a campaign must continue for more than a year to be effective.)

Such a campaign would be under the direct control of the publicist (in this case an advertising agency) and thus of the Church itself.

A public relations/publicity campaign could cost as little as £10,000 a year. The drawback is that this is much less under the control of the publicity organization and thus, again, of the Church.

It is of interest, on the subject of money, that the Roman Catholic Church is spending (sporadically) at the rate of £50,000 a year via the Catholic Inquiry Centre. The amount of money, in terms of free space and time, spent by the "come to Church" campaign in the United States runs into several million dollars a year.

To give some idea what the money would buy (in England) it may help to say that a full page in the *Daily Mail* costs £2,500. For £100,000 one can buy 25 full pages. This, of course, would be extravagant. One could buy instead 100 quarter pages, and so on.

On television, £200,000 would buy approximately 200 separate minute commercials on the London stations. To cover the country on all available stations costs about £4000 for each separate minute commercial.

Interesting as it might be to imagine what kind of campaign might be run, whether in direct advertising or means of public relations, it is a waste of time. You cannot plan without knowing what you are setting out to do.

I can imagine all kinds of arguments which individual members of the Church would put up against publicity, both moral and financial. They might or might not be right. What I feel is that, if the Church is taking its task of evangelization seriously, it owes it to itself to consult with the best available organisation. Only then could it plausibly make up its mind whether publicity is worthwhile. But not to take counsel (and I am reasonably confident it has not) seems to argue a false pride, or, worse, irresolution.

Religious Television

MICHAEL REDINGTON

Recently described in the SPECTATOR *as the* DOYEN *of religious television producers*

One of the most difficult tasks of any job is to assess its importance. Now after nearly five years of producing a religious television programme there is still no means of telling if it has any real influence over people. The viewing figures are encouraging from a start five years ago of a mere few thousand to a now regular, but seemingly never-increasing audience of three million. A lot of attention has been paid to the programme by the Press (not as much as one would have liked, however, from the Religious Press—with the exception of the Roman Catholic papers), and yet at no time does the programme ever "make news", at no time does it appear to cause comment or arouse discussion. At times it seems as if a lethargic attitude has already begun to be taken towards religious television programmes both by the audience and the Church. The programmes are established and accepted, sometimes good, sometimes bad, but appear to carry very little weight or importance.

Is this the case and if so who is to blame? Certainly not the Church. At no time, and I speak from personal knowledge, has any member of the Church ever refused to appear on any programme. All have readily accepted and co-operated in a most humble manner. Is it the television companies? I do not think so. Television Courses for training clergy have been organised and many hours of discussion of the right type of religious programmes have taken place. It is certainly not the attitude of the television staff to the religious programmes—one clergyman once said to me, "If the Church functioned like a television studio, there would be very little need for theology". Who then is to blame if television is not fulfilling the immense opportunities it at first seemed to promise? I think to a degree it is the medium itself and here we are all to blame, as no-one it seems—the Church or those concerned with the production of religious television programmes has ever really studied the medium for its own values and worth.

Television is a frank, unsubtle and hard medium. It is, as we say, the medium of the close-up. Everything is foreground. There is very little depth, beauty or grace. It is a medium of immediacy and impact, and it is a medium of impressions and ideas. It demands passion and it demands a soul. It is only really alive when it is presenting a moment of tension, whether this tension be in argument, drama or in the revelation of a man's personality and mind. How

then can the Church find itself in a medium which makes such demands? How can it find a place for itself alongside, "Rawhide", "Emergency Ward Ten", "Panorama" or "Monitor"? This is the problem and dilemma that faces all concerned with religious television, and it is only rarely that there are glimpses of the Church coming to terms with this situation.

The majority of religious programmes are talks and discussions. The subjects one hopes are of interest to the majority of viewers, but the difficulty in presenting such programmes is who to choose as participants. Should one choose an authority on the subject whose views everyone respects but who can be extremely dull in conversation, or should one chose a personality who can argue and present a good case but who has only a superficial knowledge of the subject? The majority of people would prefer the personality every time.

Here is a problem that confronts the Church: is it its duty to produce such a personality?

No-one can judge how a person will appear on television, and one of the tragedies is that one wrong choice does immediate harm to the whole Church. Television requires a person to be courageous and forthright but so many church spokesmen spend their time giving all the aspects and all the points of view. "There is no easy answer" is always the answer the Church gives, but this does not satisfy the hungry mind of the viewer who is listening to the muddled answers on vital issues. The viewer immediately becomes indifferent and mutters "typical of the Church".

Many people accuse television of being merely outrageous and sensational. This is not true but it does require statements that are fearless and impassioned, and it is surely not un-Christian to expect that the major issues of our day can be spoken of in this way.

But is a discussion on television the best way to present religious subjects? The answer is really no, people do not listen. Sound radio does it better, and the written word better still. But such programmes are simple to arrange, cheap and frankly the only known way of presenting many subjects. How is it possible to dramatise or present on television, for example, the transfiguration?

The duty of religious television is to preach and teach the gospel in a manner which is understandable and relevant to all men today. Men are needed with ideas and understanding of this problem, men who can discover and think in televisual terms how such a programme can be written. This is the only way in which religion will ever find itself in the medium of television and become a real force in the twentieth century, as the great Italian painters found their religious expression in Medieaval times. Through television religion could find the means to express itself to our age. But where in the Church are such men to be found to undertake the task? I don't know. I have found some marvellous television personalities amongst churchmen, particularly from the religious communities. But the greater problem of how religion is to be seen televisually remains to be solved.

Book Publishing and Religion

Robin Denniston

One of many unresolved questions in my mind after about eight years of uninterrupted religious publishing (which so far from meaning publishing *religiously*, means publishing religious *books*) is why should some four thousand new religious titles be published every year? As a category in publishing, religious books comes very high quantitively, fifth in fact, following fiction, general, educational and children's books. In the specialist field it is far the most prolific performer. Secular publishers still believe there is untapped gold here and they plunge about with their cheque books, particularly in America and on the continent, and it is often some years before their accountants can convince them that they are wrong. Actually the publishing of such books, as both Mr. Neville Hilditch, chairman of Mowbrays and Fr. Davey of S.P.C.K. have confirmed in print recently, is dicey at the best and easily ruinous. We tend to perfect our own ways of minimising our losses in advance, but few who are still in the business after a decade hold many illusions about quick profits. We tend to think of editions of between 1,000 and, at most, 4,000 (unless a joint printing with an American firm can be arranged) to reckon a book has a long slow life quite different to the life of a general publication, and that the opposite of a long slow life is a quick and expensive death, for which we have to pay, in full. And yet we go on doing it. Why?

One gets as fed up with religious writing as with any other sort. *Prism* has always complained about the soft double-talk of pseudo-religious, as opposed to genuinely theological, writers. And yet the sort of work he publishes matters to the publisher, whether he specialises or not. A friend recently was giving an account of an advertising campaign he was working on. Sleepless nights, terrible genuine heartaches, several near resignations and the overall tense competitiveness dominated the promotion of some piece of soap which in their sane moments those involved knew was no better than its many similar competitors. I asked him whether he thought soap, however good, was worth so much of his time, talents and sheer life-blood. The question was meaningless or rather boring to him. Promoting soap was the way he expressed himself. I was saddened. And then, as we always become cheerful when we compare the calamities of our friends even to our own calamitous lives, I felt glad that our books, from our small, specialist firm, printed by our

diminutive but charming printing works, carried (in one form or other and often heavily disguised) the saving Word of God. It is clearly more important to promote, say, instructed Bible reading than some new detergent or soft drink which next season is totally forgotten. But one needs to remind oneself of this, as apart from the boilings up of one's natural hatred of things ecclesiastical in six-monthly cycles, there often seems no more absolute worthwhileness in publishing biblical commentaries than in the memoirs of retired generals.

But why should one have to specialise at all? The Bible isn't specialised, the Gospel is to be preached to *all* nations, not to the people who know about it already. And yet the printing quantities I have mentioned are a fair index of one's success at the promotion of the Gospel. You can't of course, make people read books they don't want to, and most people don't want to read religious books—though they are quite prepared to read about people like the Bishop-elect of Masasi and others whose Christian activities have caught their imagination. *Naught for Your Comfort* has sold over 200,000 copies in the Commonwealth alone. No, religious books are bought by the religious few—the people you might say who need them least. This puts religion on the level of chess or bird-watching—harmless activities pursued happily by groups of devotees. But religion is not quite so harmless as it looks because its devotees are bidden to rope in other people whereas birdwatching is normally pursued in pleasant isolation and there are no drives to step up ornithological enthusiasms.

At this stage one might be required to distinguish "pure" theology which is bound to be specialist from applied or popular theology which is intended for wider consumption. But in point of fact one must reject this distinction as something harmful and of comparatively recent growth. The great theologians of not so long ago—Gore and Hoskyns for instance—would not have accepted that they were writing *either* for their colleagues *or* for the *hoi polloi*. Their audience was all those with an ear to hear. Pure theology, from which any relevance to ordinary preoccupations and public issues are banished, is as disastrous as the sort of popular theology which presents in a usually bastardised form the hard truths of Christianity in a form supposedly bland enough for a generation brought up on tinned food. Great theology is no more difficult to understand than any other great literature. Effort must certainly be made but such effort should be within the capacity of any educated person. True, we are short of dogmatic theologians of the stature of Hoskyns and Gore, but this shortage is not paralleled by any shortage of theological words in print.

A further distinction is more valid—between Roman Catholic, Anglican and Non-conformist works. Amongst these three, Anglican books are far the most specialised and difficult to sell. This is a sad truth which anyone who has had to do with all three cate-

gories knows full well. Devotional writers like the Dominican Gerald Vann have large faithful audiences which their real merits would hardly seem, on Anglican standards, to justify. On the other hand there is a steady market, particularly in Australasia, for popular Dissenting works—either biblical expositions or uplift. The literary standard of such works can be deplorable and elementary logic often fares badly. But simple books for simple people is a formula which certainly makes modest non-conformist profits. The true explanation lies in the overriding fact about the contemporary Anglican theological position, referred to in widely different prismatic contexts recently by Bernard Williams and this month by John Murphy. This is that there is no Anglican theological position, there are no recognisable dogmas which to outside observers mark a book Anglican rather than catholic or protestant. It is not uninteresting that the two best-selling authors at present on the scene—C. S. Lewis and J. B. Phillips—are both Anglicans; few of their great and growing public even realise that this is so.

Another distinction to be made is between specialist religious firms and general firms who run a religious department. The standard of production amongst books from the latter stables has until recently tended to be very much higher, but nowadays the S.C.M. Press and Longman's religious offshoot have set an example in appearance not just to the rest of the religious trade but to the whole business, while our more firmly entrenched colleagues—S.P.C.K. and Mowbrays—have also taken themselves in hand, sometimes with excellent results. Theologically this is much more important than it sounds. If one believes—and this is, of course, what we are trying to get at all the time—that religion is not a small dim part of life but the whole of life suddenly made explicable and acceptable, then books that are particularly religious need to look particularly good. And even if the facts of the case prevent the identification of religion and life in the way that is the ideal, it is vital that religious books should not look depressing, old-fashioned or shoe-string publications. The public today is highly conscious of packaging, in books no less than in cigarettes. Religious books, on the whole, are packaged much better than they were ten years ago, and they would be better still, if the money were available.

It is sometimes thought that a religious book will sell many more copies if it is on the list of a good general firm than if it is published, not to be too dignified, by such as the Faith Press. This is often wrong, for specialist firms have their uses and whereas we can sell in good quantities to a few customers who know and rely on the quality of our books and our service, large general firms cover many more retail outlets at a lower average sale, and with considerably higher overheads. The retail trade generally does not like religious books except for the J. B. Phillips translations and the Fontana series; they leave the supplying of religion to a specialist shop if there is one anywhere near. This means that the process of

specialisation, begun when the religious writer has written his religious book, continued when it is published under the auspices of the religious editor, is concluded when it is sold, or not sold, through the religious bookshop. We may, and we do, deplore the theology of this; and in our despair we may turn on those few exclusively Anglican firms who continue to supply us, despite discouragement and sometimes financial embarrassment, and say their service, their production, their outlook is no good, too churchy, when all they (we) are doing is to mirror the state of the church in the world today—a small body of rather withdrawn people in an indifferent world commissioned to communicate the saving Word and, apparently, powerless to do so. We may praise the secular—be it person, publisher or bookshop—just *because* it isn't churchy, and because it is bright and obviously prospering. But this is only the mirror of the despair at our failure to resolve our tension—the tension between the good news we know and the people around us who don't wish to know about it. Religious publishing, then, is simply rubbing salt into the wound, or increasing the tension yet further, by making a deliberate attempt to promote by the means at our disposal the good news. One might well reflect at the absurdity of it all.

But this absurdity comes into proportion if you consider the attitude of a good general firm to the publishing of religious books. Few publishers go in for religion for the money alone, at least not after the first frenzy I've already referred to and which actually is induced by the very different scene in America where religion, and therefore religious books, has become a part of social arrival. Lacking the money incentive secular publishers here do it because they believe in what they are doing, or because they are worried about the intrinsic valuelessness of some of the other parts of their list. They take it with great, one might sometimes think too great, seriousness. They pay royalty advances which make us specialists look like beggars. Most of the great works of theology, up to and including the work of Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, are published by general firms, and this is hardly surprising since enterprises of this sort need resources which specialists can rarely command. Publishers, like other mortals, are interested in immortality, and the cash value of this is a list of publications which will be respected and sold after they are dead. Looked at thus, theological publishing becomes distinctly more promising. The recurring speculation in the office when the typists have gone home and the rest of the staff have gone to a cocktail party, is the book or books which will stand the test of time, when profits are no longer of any account and some degree of permanency in a world of ridiculous transience may transpire.

Comment

Earlier in the year, anticipating this number on the Church and Press, we sent out to twenty-eight small religious papers, Anglican, Roman and Free Church, a questionnaire asking for frank answers to such questions as "What is your circulation? (be truthful)" and "What do you think of your future?"

We felt that a minor enquiry into the state of health of small religious magazines might tell us something of the general state of contemporary Christianity. We received answers from twenty-two of the twenty-eight people we wrote to, and of these the most prompt and uniformly courteous replies came from our Roman brethren, who were also much less shy than anyone else in answering difficult questions.

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The *Downside Review* (Benedictine) for instance, which sells 1,150 quarterly, has been going very steadily upwards and is subsidized to the tune of a £100 a year by Downside. *The Life of the Spirit* (Dominican) has been going longer—fourteen years, circulation 1,500 and has been up to 2,000. Its captive audience is, "nuns, I imagine". It pays lay contributors and is subsidised roughly up to £500 a year. It was started by Fr. Conrad Pepler, O.P., to provide an English equivalent of *Vie Spirituelle* and it seems to us extremely well edited. *Pax* from the Prinknash Benedictines circulates rather less than this. Asked for his future prospects the Editor says, "I imagine it will keep going". We are happy to exchange magazines with all these. The *Buckfast Chronicle* wrote generally about the problems it is facing. We had a reply from *Blackfriars* but have lost it. The similarity in "overall intentions" of these magazines does make one wonder whether there is really room for them all. They aim to help people to become better catholics, this is a praiseworthy aim, but there aren't so many different ways of killing a cat.

The most off-beat Roman periodical is printed and edited by that fascinating figure Fr. Brocard Sewell, O.Carm. (approximate circulation 600, rising slowly, subsidised by Fr. Sewell's printing activities—"the bills are paid somehow", he says. A number of well-known writers, such as Christine Brooke Rose, contribute. A particular feature is numbers devoted to particular writers "of special merit but not of maximum fame".

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We probably failed to cover the Free Churches and the Church of Scotland properly. We sent out to four but only received an answer

from the *Scottish Journal of Theology*, the best scholarly religious periodical published in Britain. Professor Torrance himself answered the questionnaire. The *Journal* has been going thirteen years and circulates about 2,000 copies. Subsidised to begin with, "we now stand on our own feet but it is hard going with the constant increases in printing". The Editor has far more good articles than he can use and thinks the future prospects good, as subscriptions are increasing in America and copies are sold on the Continent. The over-all intention is the "rehabilitation of Biblical History and Theological History, with the purpose of helping and strengthening the Church in ecumenical relations".

* * * *

We had answers to all but one of our Anglican correspondents though some of these displayed a proper Anglican caution. We cannot, for instance, publish answers about *Theology* or the *Church Quarterly Review* although *Prism* readers will know many of these for themselves. The editors of the two periodicals are distinguished churchmen whom we are very glad to call friends and whose encouragement over prismatic affairs has never been lacking.

In the Anglican field one can conveniently separate those published by Communities and others. As to the latter what is most noticeable is the wide circulation compared with their Roman opposite numbers, for example, the *Student Movement* 8,000, *Church Observer*, *Frontier* and the *Reader* around 5,000, *St. Raphael Quarterly*, the *Layman* and the *Vision* 2,500 and *Sobornost* 1,700. The higher circulation periodicals are all tied to captive audiences—student Christians, and Church Unionites and Readers respectively, so hardly come within the scope of this enquiry. They each say that circulation is "rising slowly", and each promote by badgering their members. *Frontier* is probably read by most prismatic readers. Associated with the Christian Frontier Council and edited by that key Anglican figure John Lawrence it is particularly strong where the editor's own interests are most manifest. Its get-up, though interesting, includes single and double-columns, sometimes on the same page—presumably for the sake of economy. This seems a pity.

The Layman (prospects, "good" ; intention, "to bring Christianity to life") is an independent magazine known to many *Prism* readers as is *Christian Stewardship*, at 9d. a copy. *The Vision* (captive audience "mostly clergyman and devout ladies") promotes retreats and the *St. Raphael Quarterly*, going since 1915 and independently edited by Fr. Cooper, whom members of Convocation have reason to respect, promotes the Church's ministry of Healing. *Sobornost* (prospects "good") promotes relations with the Eastern Churches and publishes some extremely good articles in a tone of controlled spirituality which is a model to others.

The youngest candidate is *Breakthrough* about which another correspondent writes below.

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Of the Communities' journals the Franciscans do best, 8,000, excellent format and editorial matter. The *C.R.* a little less (the editor "has no time to promote it"). It has recently undergone an interesting metamorphosis. *S.S.M. Quarterly* circulates 6,500, rising, and the entire cost is borne by the Society. Cowley Fathers circulate 1,700 of the *Cowley Evangelist* and Nashdom prints 2,500 of their *Record* twice a year. To the question has it a captive audience the Nashdom editor replied "not normally, but some subscribers have been in jail" and "if so what nature?" "human".

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Perhaps the most interesting point of comparison is between the publications of the Anglican and Roman Communities. Except for the *Franciscan News*, the appearance of ours cannot touch theirs. Ours tend to look cheap if not nasty, and are given away. Theirs are expensive and lush. Their contents tend to be more serious and weighty, not so many sermons and more culture, and they have more talent from the literary world to draw on than ours.

This enquiry certainly proves nothing but it does suggest a sense of liveliness and faith amongst English Roman Catholics which cannot be matched by the Established Church, whose products are less attractive in appearance and clearly designed to minimise costs rather than attract admiration. Amongst Free Churches the situation is worse still, judging from the recent article in the *British Weekly* which deplored the fact that they had no equivalent of *Anglican World* or *Prism*. *Prism*, by the way, circulates 2,000 copies a month, is subsidised by private individuals and the Society of the Faith, doesn't pay its contributors, is editorially independent, has been going for 3½ years and will continue, we hope, at least as long again.

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BREAKTHROUGH. *A correspondent writes:*—A parish priest once claimed that the best way he knew of strengthening his people's faith in the Church of England was to invite a Free Church minister to address his C.E.M.S. That is rather the effect of an article on Congregationalism in the May issue of *Breakthrough*, a new Christian periodical born recently in Oxford. One is left wondering if there can possibly be any *raison d'être* for the modern Independents. But this is to be unfair to *Breakthrough*, which has much to commend it in spite of the meaningless word-play and off-putting phraseology in

the editorial statement of its aims and objects. It is, so we are told, a product of the "contemporary Christian situation" which seeks "to represent the trends in this situation" rather than setting forth "any clear and coherent attitude, any *policy*", and there is a promise to offer "not a reformulation of antique solutions, but the answer which makes sense to *us*".

There is an article on the Methodist Class Meeting by Mary Davies, who seems to be a sort of Dissenting Valerie Pitt, and a useful comment on Oxford religious activities ("On Coming to Terms" by Chris Kemp), marred only by a suggestion that the S.C.M. should be "a forum in which the insights offered by the different faculties would become theologically relevant, and in which the fight for some effective means of communication other than slogans would be fought out". (Really, what *do* these phrases mean?) With the exception of an irrelevant article on the Psychology of Conversion, the remainder of Issue Two is stimulating, often provocative and always readable.

The theme of the Cult of the Mediocre by Muriel Fosbury ("What does seem wrong to me is the view that Christ's teachings are composed of some pliable and contractible material which can be bent and pushed into any shape to suit popular demand") and Caesar's Identity by Keith Robbins ("The report of the Free Church Federal Council meeting at Sheffield discloses that nuclear weapons were not discussed, because it was known that there would be differences of opinion." "The Church lacks a common moral vocabulary as much as the nation does.") and Capitulation or Passive Resistance by Christopher Illa ("It would be much clearer for us if like the early Christians we were told to abjure Christ and say, 'The Bomb is Lord'. The reason for a Christian's protest now is that this is what he is in fact required to do; by tacit acquiescence most of the Church has already done it.")—all these have the same plea: that the Church must make up its mind about things that matter and speak with the voice of one with authority.

It would seem that the cry of *Prism* has its echo in nonconformist circles.

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BOOKSTALLS. *Another correspondent writes:* The experience of organising a bookstall has convinced me of the cardinal importance of popular literature for Christianity in its work today. But the standard of church bookstalls is at present woefully low. This is how the parish bookstall should be organised.

The first essential is a good setting. Visitors must be able to see all the literature and they must be encouraged to buy. For this display there are several basic requirements. The pamphlets must not be layered with grime nor ought the corners of the covers curl in the damp (they do, six cases out of ten). Each work must have an

attractive cover which will persuade people to buy. Prices must be clearly marked. The literature must be frequently changed and it should be topical. Above all, a colourful and eye-pleasing display is of imperative importance.

The next step is to choose the literature itself. Most visitors come to a church primarily interested in the building and its history. This is a natural interest and it must be catered for. Literature on the church should consist of (a) a short, clear and well-produced Guide to the Church, price 1/– to 2/6, (b) a few up-to-date parish magazines, (c) picture-postcards of the Church, price 6d., and (d) a Guide to the Locality, if such a work exists. All these sell in great numbers and help to finance the Christian literature which is, after all, the *raison d'être* of the bookstall.

At present most parish bookstalls fail to sell Christian literature. One of the reasons for this is simply that people are not cast in the same mould ; they are, as we know, both young and old, rich and poor, high and low. The popular literature of the Church must make its appeal to all people. If an incumbent insists on filling his parish bookstall only with works to his own liking it will fail in its task.

This is a pity because there is a multitude of visitors to our parish churches : the tourist with no specific leaning to Christianity, the coachload of Mothers Union members on an outing and, above all, children. Children are voracious buyers of literature they like and many parents, who won't look at Christian literature themselves, will buy for their off-spring. It is a mistake to provide namby-pamby stories and pictures because children are surprisingly sophisticated these days. In this respect the Religious Educational Press is excellent and its "Dainty Books" (9d.) and "Children's Prayers" (8d.) can be especially recommended. Also good are the Blandford Press' "Very First Bible Painting Books" (6d.) which sell in great numbers. The importance of supplying literature for children cannot be over-stressed.

The backbone of the bookstall are the paperback publications of Penguin, Pan and Fontana (the modern translations of the New Testament and C. S. Lewis's *The Screwtape Letters*). These can be backed with weightier works such as *The Confessions of Saint Augustine* and *The Imitation of Christ*. In the range of pamphlets dealing with such aspects of Christianity as belief, prayer, stewardship and marriage, there is Sangster's *A Spiritual Check-up* and *Twelve Ways of Service* (Westminster Press), *A Book of Daily Prayers* (Mothers' Union) and *The Threshold of Marriage*. It is best to offer a wide and changing variety of these pamphlets, not letting any one tradition of the Church dominate the selection.

The bookstall is completed by a stock of coloured picture-postcards of the great religious pictures from the National Gallery, price 6d. These aim to raise the popular taste in religious art, often deplorably low. And, of course, no bookstall is complete without its copies of the current issue of *Prism*.

It must be stressed that the arrangement of literature on a bookstall should be kept as flexible as possible. The above remarks are meant to serve as a general guide.

I emphasise the importance of the "lay" publishers because the Christian publishing houses are, with some exceptions, poor in quality. Their pamphlets are mawkish in content, the printing and lay-out is inferior and the prices are far too high. Most publishers are content to advocate one trend of Christianity, whether it be High Church Devotions or Low Church Tracts. The simple necessity of publishing popular literature, suitable for the basic task of evangelisation, passes them by. (I nearly named the offenders which would not be discreet. Most publishers have sinned.)

One cannot trust the quality of any Christian publisher and so one must pick and choose a cross-section of literature from the whole range of publications available. Bad and unattractive literature will not sell, no matter how hard one tries. At the start of organising a bookstall one inevitably makes mistakes and buys unsaleable material. The best course is to note the mistake down and remove the offending material from the bookstall. Classed as bad unattractive literature are all TRACTS, without exception. The sooner tracts disappear the sooner popular Christian literature will revive. Never allow tracts on the bookstall.

When organising a bookstall one must not be hidebound and it is no sin to run it as a profitable concern. Obtain every penny of discount possible from the publishers (don't buy from a bookshop), change the literature at frequent intervals, make the literature topical in subject. There are several obvious seasons: works on Our Lord and the Incarnation at Christmas, literature for the young at Confirmation time, devotional works during Lent, pamphlets on marriage in March and April, and so on. This will give the bookstall a fresh and exciting appearance and it will attract people. Once attracted they may buy.

If the parish is going to have a good bookstall it is quite clear that the Vicar will not have the necessary time and energy to organise it. He ought to accept this fact and appoint one of the laity to do the job. There should be at least one person in the parish, sufficiently capable and educated, to be trusted with the post of organiser. The Vicar can maintain a general oversight.

The real test for any parish bookstall is whether it makes money for the church. This may seem mercenary but the fact is that a bookstall, which makes a profit, is successfully selling Christian literature. It is not stuffed with dud pamphlets. It is doing some of the work of evangelising the English people.

Ideas and Practice

Sociology and Missionaries

We are implored, from time to time, to abandon struggles about inessentials and to "get on with Christian living". The plea is plausible, but ill-conceived, for the question between the parties in the Church of England is precisely the nature of Christian living. One side sees the life of grace as individual, spontaneous, and "spiritual", the other as corporate, ordered and sacramental. These views are not perhaps as incompatible as their adherents suppose but they are certainly concerned with the substance of faith and practice. A man who believes that bread and wine and water are the vehicles of divine power will, inevitably, be more concerned about the use of material things than a man who believes in total depravity. His concern may lead to fussification with externals—we all know about Ronnie Knox's accordion pleated surplices—but it has another side. Dolling quarrelled with his Bishop about an altar, Rosenthal about Reservation, but Dolling's priestly vocation was literally a mission to the poorest, and Rosenthal was one of those clerics whose obvious concern for social justice redeemed, in the thirties, the sloth of *laissez-faire* Anglicanism. The spikery and the social concern had the same root, the conviction that God's will must be fulfilled in the social and material environment of God's people.

Last week I prayed at the Eucharist for the repose of Rosenthal's soul, for Rosenthal was one of the earliest members of the Summer School of Sociology which I was then attending. This School is now sponsored by the Church Union, but was the creation of the Christendom movement. The assertion of this movement was simple. It was that Revelation displays God's purpose for society and the material order as well as for the souls of individual Christians, and that theology has a proper interest in the structure and activities of society. The movement's thinking, and the school's, was more complex, and more open to criticism. It not only relied a good deal on political thinking of the Thomist tradition, which is one thing, but, under Chesterton's influence, gave a special Christian brand label to patterns of organisation similar to that in which the Thomist tradition grew up. It tended, or some of its members did, to daff aside the professional economists, and the new science of empirical sociology, but its own jargon was as impenetrable as that of the academics. Worst of all it would not answer the question "What then ought the Church to do in this situation?" All this alienated the fiercer prismatic minds amongst those who have been attracted to it since the twenties. But the fact remains that since the

twenties it has gone on asserting the Church's duty to think about the social and political content of revelation in relation to the situation in which it found itself. All those young, and not so young enthusiasts who talk about the Church in Society as though they personally invented the phenomenon, really voice the convictions of a Catholic tradition which the School helped to revive and to preserve in the Anglican Church.

This year it turned its attention to the problems of multi-racial societies. Impressions are easy: the black face of Mirfield's Fr. Simeon reflecting, across generation, race, and some difference of religion, the extraordinary Christian sweetness of Wilberforce's portrait shown in a film of the Federation of the West Indies. The Irish Monsignor commenting on his own recordings of the secret rites of the Yoruba people. Or the Secretary of the Church Union, that unsung Anglican character, giving his usual demonstration that there is more to the Church Union than pilgrimages to Walsingham. But though persons are of supreme importance in the Church, personalities are not. What was more interesting was the gradual emergence of a common theme in the insistence of all the speakers on the ineptitude of Europeans, whether in the Government or the Church, in dealing with the customs and culture of non-European peoples. Philip Mason indicated that much of the present political difficulty in Africa was due to our initial misunderstanding of African systems of land tenure, and worse, to a holier-than-thou attitude about the many forms of African tribal democracy. Parliamentary government, or as he called it *cricket democracy* of the English pattern was not, perhaps, an immutable law of creation.

But if these misunderstandings exist in politics and in economic organisation still more do they exist in religion. Mr. Mohaleroe, an African layman, emphasised that the greatest difficulty for the African Anglican was the Church's own teaching that his religion must be worked out in the service of his own people, for neither the Church nor the State gave him the opportunity for that service except, as Africans now conceived it, in a struggle against a dominantly European power and culture. This could appear as a struggle against the Church which in African eyes comes to be identified with the European. The truth of this was demonstrated only last month by the ineptness of the Bishop of Mashonoland in threatening excommunication against those engaged in the Rhodesian riots. Violence is not a Christian method of settling disagreements, but so long as the Bishop has not excommunicated those who practise discrimination against Africans this ban of his must appear as the use of a spiritual power on the settlers' side in the quarrel. The angering thing is that there is implicit in the teachings of the Church the answer to Mr. Mohaloroe's frustration. For the Protestant Succession in England, and therefore the Establishment, is based on the ancient doctrine that Governments which, however lawful, behave unjustly, may be lawfully resisted and even over-

turned. The sooner we say this loudly and clearly in Africa (and perhaps to our own Bishops) the better it will be for the Church's witness. The same thing is true of Mr. Mohaleroe's other complaint —the identification of Christianity with Western traditions of Art and Worship. Matteo Ricci and the great Jesuit Missionaries recognised that Evangelism meant identification, that a culture could only be converted from within. Well, Rome must answer for the Vatican politics which destroyed that great vision. Anglicanism, to its shame, has never had it. The arrogant conviction that English Protestantism of a middle-class pattern is synonymous with Christian truth is not entirely absent even from the modern Church. It is extremely difficult not to be identified with one's own culture, not to find it unimaginable that true religion can take forms with which one's grandmother was not familiar. But it has to be done.

Justice requires that it shall be done. Yet in religion something more is involved than justice. Monsignor Walsh reminded us, but not deliberately, of the extent to which the Roman Church has turned its back on its own mistakes, for what he discussed was the principal of adaption in mission work. Adaption requires the missionary to understand the existing culture and religion of his people. But he must first recognise that God speaks in every people. That recognition is vital not only for the African Churches, but for us.

Valerie Pitt

Christianity and the Psychotic

What has the Church got to say to the psychotic? We have a debt of gratitude to pay to Jung for his guidance for co-operation with the psychiatrist and psycho-therapist in healing the psycho-neurotic. Though this field is exacting and exciting, there is a lot of information we can act on. But I want to leave this to one side and consider the priest's, and other Christians', dealings with the psychotic, and especially the schizophrenic.

Though I risk the danger of over-simplification, I want first to draw a rough sketch of a "typical" psychotic. The first—and most difficult—difference from the psycho-neurotic is that he has, at least by the time he is hospitalised, no insight into his condition. Secondly he is, without begging the philosophical question, out of touch with, or withdrawn from, reality. Reasoning cannot reach him, nor can rationalisation. Thirdly, there is a severe change in personality, that the patient does not try to conceal. If this generalisation is admitted, certain problems already arise: 1. What method of "getting through to the patient" is to be used if reason is to fail, and where emotive language may do great harm? 2. Even if

"through", how can the Gospel—that is at least not contrary to reason—be announced? 3. What sort of "health" is to be the goal of the cure?

The first question, I think, has some sort of answer, perhaps because it is also a problem for the psychiatrist! But its answer raises a further problem. The answer is, I think, that no amount of *talking* will do any good. At the stage where psycho-therapeutic methods cannot be used, it is foolish to think pastoral counselling can either. If it is used, it may aggravate the disease. There physical treatment and drugs will be used. What is the pastoral function of the priest here? It is not to exhort, nor to chide, but, I think, just to be there. Even if nothing is said, disinterested compassion is the necessary function—think of the Christian Comforter, *the* gift of the Lord to us, the tremendous love of God that is "*with* us". He who said, "I am *with you* always" . . . can surely inspire us to give what we have received, and so help prepare the psychotic for this "with-us-ness". The additional question raised is, "What about the so-called incurables?" With the patient who is either beyond cure, or unfit for more than hospital care, I think the priest's part is to show the much-maligned Tender Loving Care, and just *be* there. Aldous Huxley, under the influence of mescalin (that gives at least some experience of a schizophrenic state) was asked,

> "If normally in this state, would you be able to control your madness?"
>
> "No", he said, "But perhaps I could if there were someone there to tell me about the Clear Light" (of the *Tibetan Book of the Dead*).

Then he comments,

> "What those Buddhist monks did for the dying . . . might not the modern psychiatrist do for the insane? Let there be a voice to assure them . . . that in spite of all the terror, all the bewilderment and confusion, the ultimate Reality remains unshakeably itself . . ."

This is an over-romanticising but has an important point: if the psychiatrist, *a fortiori* the priest!

Let us now turn to the second question. Fr. Small in his booklet, *Mental First Aid* gives a quick answer:

> "The wholesome medicine of the Gospel. But let it *be* wholesome and not the 'safe in the arms of Jesus' variety."

Wayne Oates gives the further criterion of "outward-reaching and self-costing religion". This is mainly applicable, once again, to the psycho-neurotic and the psychotic well on the way to recovery. But for the psychotic it is difficult to know what to do to fulfil the charge to evangelise them. It is interesting to note that in the Gospel narratives (see especially Mk. ch. 5, v. 16) Jesus does not talk to the man, but to the "demon". He acts, and *then* talks to the

cured man. This has some relevance, I think, in that pastoral action rather than verbal evangelisation is called for, and also that if the psychotic is allowed to go to the Chapel, it is the ceremonial that can, perhaps, help more than the ritual.

I do not pretend that this is an answer, but I think it may open the way to a more practical discussion.

The third question is one that is at first more academic, but yet of frightening import. There are two major answers that are put forward by the Christian: I feel neither is exclusively right. The first is that of Jung's "personal re-integration" or "psychic synthesis". Briefly, it is a re-statement of the "fullness of the stature of Christ". I will call this the Synthesis answer. It is obvious that this is an answer which has many echoes in the New Testament, and it is a good summary of what the Christian should go towards. It is much favoured by the Protestant mind: it is an important end of the Christian life. But, what about the psychotic? How can he hope, if chronically disturbed, to reach this synthesis?

Restricting this question, as I do for this essay, to the psychotic, what can be the answer? The second answer is that, if I remember rightly, of Fr. Victor White, O.P. He says, with great insight into the problem, that it is very probable that some saints have been psychotics, and it is therefore very dangerous to regard the psychotic state as, Christianly speaking, detrimental or pathological spiritually. The "health" to be looked for is referred to in the Parable of the Talents, and consists of *sanctification* of whatever state the Christian is in.

Before going on I want to meet an objection that may be raised, that the doctor is bound to seek bodily and psychic health, whereas the priest is bound to seek spiritual health. But I am presupposing the co-operation and mutual understanding of doctor and priest. I would maintain the two supposed positions cannot be contradictory, but may appear different.

For the chronic psychotic there are great difficulties in ever hoping to achieve integration of body, mind and spirit, even when "cured", and it is at least arguable that pressure brought to bear on him or her when reasonably well may lead to despair and even relapse. I think the Synthesis answer cannot be applied generally to psychotics. As to the sanctification answer, I think it is far more feasible, and in accord with our Lord's teaching. Where there can be significant speech between patient and priest in those circumstances I believe that careful instruction and guidance, that avoids the triggering off of pathological religious symptoms, is possible: and probably best. For the Christian, health lies far more in the increasing ability to love that sanctification must bring than in the possibly frustrating attempts at synthesis, though this is *part* of health.

This essay is not satisfactory: I did not intend that it would be. I have asked questions that I personally think about, and hence

must seek some answer to. The "answers" I have outlined are all, I think, incomplete. I hope that other Christians who are involved in psychiatry at any level may have some deeper and more satisfactory answers. I have deliberately restricted what I have written to a small field, and I know it presupposes a lot of my own experience and thinking. But it is a field where the harvest truly is plenteous, and that will by God's unfailing help be reaped.

Anthony P. Macmillan Coxon

Is Modern Management Irresponsible?

A Note on a Continuing Controversy

There is much talk nowadays about the "managerial revolution". Many people seem to be worried about what is alleged to be a growing concentration of managerial power—particularly in the large corporation. From America has come a spate of sociological criticism, ranging from William Whyte's *Organisation Man* to Packard's *Status Seekers*. It is alleged that the big corporation may become a threat to individual liberty, that top managements may be assuming, either voluntarily or perforce, too much "irresponsible power". In this country the left wing has also expressed serious concern—for example, in the Labour Party's pamphlet *Industry and Society*, in the essays by young Socialists in *Conviction*, and more recently in the writings of Professor Titmuss.*

To many thoughtful people outside industry the rights and wrongs of this issue are plain puzzling. Indeed it is quite staggering how much sheer ignorance there is in quite intelligent circles about how modern management really works. Books on the subject tend to be either bare-bone treatises or the cautious and white-washing reminiscences of industrialists. Perhaps what are needed are really good novels about industrial management—of the kind H. G. Wells and Disraeli wrote about political life. The problems of social power and responsibility, the politics of Board Room and shop floor, the interplay of conscience, capital, and control in the big corporation provide rich material for the novelist.

On the face of it people like myself—and I have only a few years' industrial experience, and am not a writer—seem to have little justification for intervening in such great controversies as these.

* [His pamphlet *The Irresponsible Society* (Fabian Society, 2/6), particularly where he shows how much insurance firms now own enterprises, cuts right into present political complacency—*Editor.*]

Yet I believe we should do so—if only to help in scotching some of the weirder misconceptions now fashionably current on the subject of managerial power.

My own experience is indeed limited, though in the five years I have been in industry I suppose I have moved about more than most. On coming down from Oxford I plumped for a "Management Training Scheme" in one of the very biggest and smoothest of the industrial corporations. There followed a year in a small factory near London largely in overalls and on shift work (a fairly typical shop floor experience) ; a period in the Company's London Office as a back room boy to a rather high level committee ; and a longer period as a labour officer in an enormous factory on the North East coast representing industry in its ugliest and most implacable sense. Finally, on joining a different Company—smaller and livelier than the first—I spent a year in a management job which again was vastly different ; this time in a difficult but challenging country, British Guiana, thousands of miles away in South America.

In bits of experience like these one lives through the obvious fact that the decisions of management have an enormous impact, not only on employees' working lives, but on their social and private lives as well. Thus the incidence of shift working powerfully affects family life ; practices on redundancy pay affect mobility ; Company housing and welfare may create "sugar daddy" paternalism ; whilst social differences are powerfully reinforced or diminished by Company policies in such matters as separate canteens and graded sick pay and pension arrangements. More subtly perhaps the extent to which employees are listened to and confided in at the place of work—another of management's vital *social* decisions—strongly influences their personal development as adults and citizens.

Thus, management's social power is real enough. Yet experience inside industry, however brief, justifies one in saying that the "feel" of it is much more complex and subtle than the critics of managerial power often suggest. It is tempting to imagine smooth board room élites calmly moulding social situations, moving masses of men and women from factory to factory, from job to job, as in a game of chess. In reality one finds that management's power, particularly in the big organisation is subject to a mass of outside pressures over which it has little or no control—pressures from public opinion, trade unions, and government, that the disposal of its human resources management is therefore constantly and perhaps rightly hemmed in and circumscribed ; that the social aspect of management is essentially one of constant adjustment. Nemesis quickly overtakes the company which rides rough-shod over people's feelings or big trade union interests or the wishes of the public. In fact managers are becoming increasingly like politicians. They are adjusters, reconcilers of different interests.

Managers, of course, help *themselves* in terms of high salaries,

expense accounts, and the like. Some of these differentials are justifiable, others are not. But in the crucial problem—which is power over *other people*—the danger is no longer old-fashioned capitalist abuse. Nor is it failure to adapt to such obvious facts of the modern world as trade unions and monopoly commissions, since these social pressures are something which the modern business simply has to heed if it wants to survive. The vital problem is the social mood and atmosphere of management—which goes beyond mere adjustment. The crucial test is can management *look ahead* to the social needs of the next few decades and prepare for *them*?

Anyone who has been in industry knows that behind the changed power realities of modern management there are still tremendous differences in social attitude ; no amount of vague talk about human relations, to which everybody now pays lip service, can hide this fact. The gap between socially progressive managements in the newer industries and the old-fashioned textile and shipbuilding barons, for example, is fantastically wide. Middle management luncheon tables sometimes reveal not only economic ignorance but also social prejudice. Frequent too is the paradox of managers who behave progressively and humanely, but still describe what they think they are doing in terms of 19th century business.

The essential difference may now lie between the short-term adjusters on the one hand, and those managements which are really looking ahead, socially as well as technically, on the other. And some of the real tests of whether managements are socially progressive may be emerging as these :

1. Does management genuinely open its doors to all social groups and types of recruit ; to eggheads and roundheads, public school and grammar school men, diplomats and individualists, radicals and conservatives?
2. Does management act paternalistically by trying to do things for employees which either they themselves ought to be doing or which the state should be doing for them? Or does it limit such action to meeting genuine needs which no other agency can or will supply (such as good retirement pensions)?
3. Does management seek to reduce out-of-date social differences between different groups of employee? With advancing automation, increasing flexibility between jobs, and a work force which has changed radically in its composition, such differences will become less and less defensible either on grounds of economic sense or equity.
4. What importance does management really give to labour relations? For example, does top management negotiate with trade unions, how quickly are disputes dealt with, and are employees told about big changes, such as work study and redundancy, which will affect their working and personal lives?
5. Does management tell employees about how the business works and how it is doing? (Within the limits of simplicity).

6. Does management behave as a good citizen in such matters as charitable expenditures, air pollution, factory location, and office design?
7. When companies invest overseas do their managements try to project "little England", or do they genuinely adapt to local problems and aspirations, particularly in the under-developed countries?

In matters like these the best managements are already showing great liveliness. Instead of indulging in blanket denunciations the critics of managerial power would surely do well to ask why such liveliness is not more widespread. In a determined attack on the remaining bastions of managerial complacency intelligent criticism, from sociologists and watchful public opinion alike, can play an important part. But it must be selective.

Overarching all this is still one major problem about which there has already been much controversy. To this minor practitioners like myself can add little. Some managements use their social power progressively in the ways mentioned above; most at least act responsibly—hemmed in as they are by social pressures. But *to whom* are the managements of public companies in fact responsible? The short answer is legally to the share-holders who own the business. But for a large number of reasons this answer does not seem to be as realistic and convincing as it used to be. It may be that over the next few decades or so management will develop its own social ethic and philosophy—of stewardship, and of fourfold responsibility to share-holders, consumers, employees and the community.

Jonathan Boswell

Presenting Our Faith to Agnostics

The core of Gospel presentation must remain the same from one age to another; the precise way in which the first Apostles proclaimed the good news in the early days of Christian history is therefore as important today as it was then. Mr. David Nicholls quotes the very appropriate Acts 2, 37:

> "When they heard this they were pricked in their hearts" and asked what they should do. "Repent and be baptized . . . for the remission of sins."

It is easy but unwise to ignore, as he does, the significance of the introductory words: "When they heard this". What was it that they heard before they were instructed to repent?

The form of Gospel proclamation varied slightly in detail from place to place. But, as Dr. C. H. Dodd has explained,* the speeches

* C. H. Dodd, *The Bible Today*, pp. 78–9.

of St. Peter in Acts 2, 14-36, 2, 36-39, 3, 12-26 and 4, 8-12, give the form as it was used in the Church at Jerusalem. It may be summarised thus: (1) The appointed time about which the prophets had spoken and to which the faithful Israelites had for long looked forward has now come; God has visited and redeemed His people. (2) This act of God, intervening in human history, is to be seen in the life of Jesus Christ, the Messiah, sent by God, put to death by men and raised up the third day. (3) By His resurrection Jesus has conquered sin and death and opened the gate of heaven to all that believe.

> "He is the stone which was set at nought of you the builders which was made the head of the corner. And in none other is there salvation."

(4) The proofs of God's present power in the world are to be found both in the fact of the resurrection and also in the clear signs of the present working of the Holy Spirit in the Church; these provide an assurance of the glory that is to come. (5) For this is only the beginning of God's Kingdom; Christ will come again at the final establishment of God's rule when all men will be judged. (6) Therefore:

> "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."

It would, therefore, seem unscriptural to preach repentance as the first requirement of a non-Christian enquirer and a travesty of the Gospel to regard the instillation of a sense of guilt as a necessary preliminary to Christian belief.

One of the besetting dangers of the evangelist is that of flinging texts about; Biblical scholars tell us that the New Testament texts were not originally intended to be treated as doctrinal propositions. One text can always be countered by another and the best way to resolve an apparent dilemma is by embracing both its horns rather than by emphasizing one to the exclusion of the other. The injunction:

> "Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of these my brethren . . . . ye did it unto me", "Inasmuch as ye did it not unto one of these least, ye did it not unto me"

in our Lord's teaching about the sheep and the goats (St. Matthew 25, 31–46), is as prominent a part of the core of the Gospel as is the injunction to repent. Both are consequences of God's revelation in Christ; what God has done and is doing for man remains primary; man's response is secondary and, indeed, essential but is only made possible because of God's loving action which demands from man the response either of acceptance or rejection.

The motive of God's action is best epitomized in John 3, 16:

> "God so loved the world that He gave . . . . ."

References to "sloppy" notions about God and His love imply a sloppy conception of love; admittedly this may be a characteristic

of the contemporary world's way of thinking. But love in the Christian sense is very different; the Christian looks at the crucifix and realises with conviction that he is contemplating a depiction of the supreme act upon earth of the Divine Charity, self-giving, sacrificial, costing, virile. Sentiment and sloppiness are far removed from the liturgical picture of the Christ alive and reigning triumphant on the Cross. God's Holiness is pre-eminent on Calvary; but in these days it is probably unwise to use the word "holiness" without explaining precisely what it means. The particular purpose of God's action, as defined in the form of Gospel presentation, is shown by the answer given to the not unimportant theological question: Why did the Incarnation take place? Owing to the dominating influence of St. Paul as interpreted by normal western theology, the answer has usually been: The Incarnation took place as a result of the fall of man in order to achieve redemption. But there has also been a continuing stream of Christian thought, sometimes very thin, less prominent in the West than in the East, which maintained that the Incarnation was always part of the Divine scheme of things and, had the Fall not taken place, would have been a splendid and magnificent revelation of Divine Charity upon earth in perfect bliss and happiness; this viewpoint would seem to preserve more safely the doctrine of God's Immutability; one of its implications is that, owing to the Fall, to the original purpose of Incarnation had to be added the need for effecting redemption with all that that involved in pain, suffering and death.

In presenting the Faith to the non-Christian enquirer William James' classification of mankind into the two types, the once-born and the twice-born, remains a true one and is important. Probably the majority of mankind is once-born; some would put the proportion as high as 75%; the minority is of the twice-born type. Yet the traditional form of Gospel presentation at any rate in the West has especially during the last 400 years, been given mainly and sometimes almost exclusively in redemptionist terms, addressed to the twice-born, rather than in Incarnational terms, more intelligible to the once-born. Especially have the full implications of the New Testament doctrine of the Kingdom, closely tied up with the Gospel of Creation, to which Westcott drew attention,* been minimised and sometimes forgotten. Instead of proclaiming the splendour and dignity of human nature, as created in God's image, which may have become marred and distorted but which cannot be entirely obliterated, the Western Church has, in the words of the Principal of Pusey House,

> "in general directed man's spiritual forces towards contrition and salvation and has always emphasised his misery and powerlessness, almost as though God made him in this condition and intends him to remain in it".†

* Westcott, *Epistles of S. John*, appendix: *Gospel of Creation.*
† *How to Conduct Retreats*, edited by Robin Anstey, p. 58.

The majority of sermons nowadays would seem to concentrate on man, his sin and his wretchedness and only very seldom propound the grandeur and splendour of God's nature, His love, His truth, His goodness, His beauty, His holiness, His patience, His humility and so on, with the positive consequences in the sphere of living that such contemplation of God evokes. This lack may account for the impression which exists that Christians have somehow to deserve the gifts of God, making themselves tolerably loveable to receive His love, achieving a degree of penitence before they can hope to receive His forgiveness. The truth, of course, is that lovableness results from recognition of the fact of God's love ; penitence emerges and deepens from the knowledge of being forgiven. Within the framework of the more positive Incarnational approach, sin describes any thought, word or action, by commission or omission, which cannot square with the fact of God's love and with man's duty to respond to that love by loving God with his whole heart, mind, soul, strength, and his neighbour as himself. Sin's catastrophe consists in the fact that, if deliberately committed, it can frustrate goodness, pervert truth and prostitute beauty.

The apparent prominence in the Gospels of the injunction to repent is not surprising. I remember how prominent a place it occupied in the presentation of Christianity in a part of Central Africa where the Church had been in existence for less than a century. It would seem that during the early years of Christianity in any country religion has of necessity to be interpreted largely in terms of morality with an emphasis, some might say an over-emphasis, upon the ethical demands of Christian discipleship, the human response appearing almost as a condition to be fulfilled before the grace of God can be received. It would not seem unreasonable to pre-suppose a similar state of affairs during the first century of Christianity in Palestine and especially in the Gentile world. It must, of course, be remembered that it was in the life and circumstances of the primitive Christian communities that the materials from which the Gospels were later written were formed. Certainly in mission history the Gospel has tended to be presented to the pagan world hitherto ignorant of it in redemptionist rather than incarnational terms. And this, if perpetuated exclusively, can result in that "travesty" of the Gospel which regards the world as inherently evil in itself and life as something to be endured, if not resisted, rather than lived and meant to be enjoyed, which looks with suspicion upon enjoyment of any kind and tends to identify virtue with the doing of things that are unpleasant.

"Astronomers, naturalists, geologists, physicists and psychologists", the Principal of Pusey House also said,* "are fascinated by the excellence, the splendour and the mystery of the Universe they observe. Their impulse to observe does not unfortunately come from their Christian belief for they often have none. But

* *op. cit.*, p. 58.

they have retained their God-given desire to know and their capacity to wonder and admire. Clearly the Creator must be—whatever else He is—exuberant, lively, lavish, ingenious and ecstatically gay".

God is certainly visible in His Creation ; especially true is this of man, created in God's image. The evangelist, therefore, when confronted with a non-Christian enquirer should begin not by seeking signs of sinfulness in him but by looking confidently for signs of the divine image, insisting upon the dignity of human nature and its immense potentialities. If he be of the twice-born type, the evangelist will seek unobtrusively and very humbly to draw his attention to the fact of God's love for him as demonstrated in the Gospel Proclamation and in bestowing forgiveness upon all who ask for it ; if he be of the once-born variety, lacking any very developed sense of guilt, the wise Christian will concentrate attention upon the splendour of God's nature with all that that involves for man and emphasise the essential goodness of God's creation. Grace completes and perfects human nature enabling it to become what it was created to be and meant to be. If there is one thing required of the agnostic as an essential preliminary to Christian belief it is, not a sense of guilt, but an awareness, gained by experience, that human efforts by themselves fail to fulfil man's highest aspirations, with a corresponding desire to receive the grace which God alone can give, and which it was the purpose of the Incarnate life of Christ to make available, and of the Gospel of the Kingdom to proclaim.

Edward A. Maycock

Letters

FATHER BEAUMONT'S POP SONGS

Dear Sir,

I would take issue with you on the statement that "one is so glad that religious pop songs exist at all that one doesn't enquire too deeply into their musicality" : this is an attitude (unworthy of *Prism*) which can easily lead to an uncritical acceptance of each and every new idea that appears to be "modern" or "contemporary" regardless of its intrinsic merit ; and this is particularly dangerous when considering the music of the Church's Worship. I, for example, would not use Fr. Beaumont's "20th Century Folk Mass" in our Church ; and this not a glib rejection by prejudicially deep-seated conservatism. I think Fr. Beaumont's effort was sincere—but I believe he missed the point. Putting that sort of thing on in Church would, quite possibly, excite the interest of young folk of the type who normally do not worship with the Church ; but it would be an ephemeral interest—there would be no abiding stay. Even if there

were any possibility of isolated instances of reclamation through its use, I do not hold that it is legitimate to try and "popularise" the Mass in such a way for the sake of attraction. Sir Ninian Comper, in answer to those people who are always shouting aloud the slogans of contemporaneity, once wrote (I quote from memory) "Church architecture should attempt to express Eternity, not novelty": and the same, to a large extent, goes for Church Music.

This does not mean that one must bury one's head in the sand and ignore Fr. Beaumont, any more than one can sensibly ignore Fr. Gelineau (a far greater figure who has achieved far more—in my opinion) or, in a different field, Father Vollwaerts. Perhaps, some time in the future, there may be a *Prism* with a symposium on Church Music—or, if this is felt to be too specialised a field, the Arts of the Church?

Yours sincerely,

ANTONY RANDLE

(*We discussed the matter more fully in our issue for February*, 1959; *and we hope to come back to it*—EDITOR.)

EXPERIMENTAL LITURGY

Dear Sirs,

What the Church needs now—according to your August *Comment* on liturgical experiments at Mirfield—is not perhaps,

> "a lot more experimenters but a lot more mediators and interpreters of an agreed corpus of liturgical experiment to clergy and laity".

It looks as if it will be a very long time before we get any authorised alternative—(even experimental)—to the eucharistic rite of 1662, but meanwhile it is important to implement in practice some of the insights of recent theological and liturgical thinking. To do this it is not enough to experiment with ceremonial changes; the offertory procession, the westward position, etc.: it is essential to make changes also in the rite.

A start was made years ago with the introduction of the so-called Interim Rite—the Prayer Book service with some additions and substitutions from the Roman Mass and with the Prayer of Consecration followed by the Prayer of Oblation and the Lord's Prayer. This has now become the accepted use in a vast number of parishes—many of them by no means "extreme"; but it is about time that it went through a second edition—revised and modernised. As an Interim Rite it will be necessarily limited by the following factors. (1) It must use Prayer Book material, often transposing the order but not changing the words. (2) It will have to be used with existing altar-books, either the unofficial Missals, the 1928 Book or the Book of Common Prayer; even though special booklets are provided for the congregation. The result will be a compromise and will of

necessity leave unaltered some of the least satisfactory features of the Prayer Book service, but it will go some way towards embodying an "agreed corpus" of liturgical thought. The following features for example should be generally acceptable, for they echo reforms which can be studied in such diverse places as the Liturgy of the Church of South India and the Report of the 1958 (Church Union) Eucharistic Congress.

(1) The Prayer for the Church must be moved to the first part of the service before the Offertory. The best sequence would be: Gospel, Sermon, Creed, Prayer for the Church.

(2) The Prayer for the Church should be divided into paragraphs so that it can be split up in some way for congregational participation —either by means of versicle and response, or by appropriate biddings read out by the deacon or a lector.

(3) The Prayer of Humble Access in its present position disrupts the Eucharistic Prayer which really begins with the Sursum Corda. It should be moved to a place between the Agnus Dei and the Communion of priest and people and could then be recited by everyone together.

(4) The Last Gospel should be dropped, though the celebrant may recite it privately on his way back from the altar to the sacristy.

(5) Although this involves an addition to the wording of 1662, the Prayer of Oblation should be linked to the Prayer of Consecration by a brief *anamnesis* such as that already provided in some missals and derived from Cranmer himself:

> "Wherefore, O Lord and heavenly Father, having in remembrance the blessed passion, mighty resurrection and glorious ascension of Thy dear Son, we Thy humble servants . . . ."

(6) (Perhaps still too controversial.) The Gloria in Excelsis should be returned to its original position at the beginning of the service.

There still remain however several features where the right solution does not seem to be absolutely clear.

(1) The "Preparation"—prayers at the foot of the altar. They could (a) be dropped altogether, like the Last Gospel, (b) be said by the celebrant and his ministers in the sacristy, (c) be used instead of the Prayer Book Communion Devotions by the priest and congregation—but not as a semi-private and semi-audible dialogue between priest and server before a dumb congregation.

(2) The Communion Devotions—Confession, Absolution, etc. They could (a) be dropped altogether—especially if the Preparation is retained, (b) be moved to the Roman position immediately before the Communion of the people, (c) be retained after the Prayer for the Church in its new position before the Offertory.

(3) The Offertory Prayer. Although the Offertory will now lead straight into the Sursum Corda and Eucharistic Prayer there is a case to be made for having a prayer "over the oblations". The alternatives for an Interim Rite seem to be (a) one (or possibly two or three to be varied *ad lib.*) of the ancient "secrets" of the Roman

rite, (b) the secret prayer of the day from the Missal—but in either case recited aloud and perhaps preceded by the versicle "Pray brethren" with its response.

What, I wonder, are the chances of a New Look Interim Rite coming into fairly general use within a year or so?

Yours faithfully,

CHESHAM BOIS. ROGER GREENACRE.

Show me reality in cupped hands
Show me the mind behind the eye,
Let me pursue the bounding edge of life,
And in the cup, taste of eternity.

Tear off the mask that hides the man,
Pull down the wall of my captivity,
Reveal the parasitic worm
In the cut flesh, show me the remedy.

In the refuse tip let the seed spring—
In the acrid water let the plant grow—
In the foetid air let the flower blossom—
And on the knacker's truck let the world know
My creature parody has been redrawn
And the original design is realised.

A. D. C. HYLAND.

Student Holiness

GEORGE BRASSINGTON

If the Christian student is honest with himself he will observe that in his university the Church is rarely the leaven in the lump; those professing the faith cannot readily communicate it to others. The difficulty arises from mistaken ideas of the relation of the student to the Body of Christ, and his vocation therein.

Two main attitudes towards religious observance can be discovered among students; the first emphasises the fact that Christians are called out from the world to share in the new life. Therefore the Christian student will withdraw from his normal environment to partake of the fellowship of a worshipping group within the university. Unfortunately the calling out does not result always in the

retention of contacts with the student population as a whole. Too often such a group become pietistic, introspective, believing itself to be the faithful remnant standing in judgment upon other students both Christian and non-Christian. Meetings are held at times when most students would have more mundane pleasures (for example Saturday evenings) and the unbeliever concludes that Christianity is negative—no cinema, smoking, dancing, etc. Often the test of membership is a particular type of conversion.

A second viewpoint is that of the student who makes no impact upon his environment because he chooses to worship where he is attracted, perhaps by the preacher, ritual, or music. He knows few others in the congregation and religion consists for him in church attendance on Sunday to which the events of the week bear little relation. Often these people will be enthusiastic for a short time about some world-problem, for example refugees, but through the emotional content it lacks the sustained character of the Christian life and consequently fades out.

Primarily there is involved in these two views a limitation in the doctrine of the Church as the Body of Christ and the redeemed community. A group of Christian students is set up, united not because they are Christians but because they are students. But the division should be between Church and world, not between various like-minded groups within the Church. We are all joined in the one Body by our baptism into His death, incorporated with the divine society. Every Christian must bring his influence to bear upon the environment in which he lives, and the source of his strength lies in the Spirit-filled Body. It should not be customary for factory-hands or teachers in a congregation to found a society within the Church based upon the common occupation: our vocation is essentially to a belief in Christ, and consequent upon this is the vocation to live the Christian life in a particular occupation. Students must beware of accepting their academic world as the norm; for their life is lived in a society in which little contact is made with the actual world of sweat, anguish and toil.

We must beware of seeking fellowship as an end in itself. The student, instead of living the normal Christian life, finds a fellowship which attracts him, in which he has no contact with the "awkward" members of most congregations. Fellowship is easy where there are no difficulties to it. But the Atonement carries the meaning of a breaking down of barriers between Jew and Gentile, black and white, student and dustman. To pretend that withdrawal can be made from the claims of society is a falsification of the Gospel. The student must find some way of illustrating the reality of this truth.

In university towns few students are to be found in down-town congregations. Clergymen in these parishes often face an apathy which could be fought through the presence of a small group of spiritually mature students, providing vigour and life. And often students do not benefit from the maturity of older Christians at a

time when their beliefs are most likely to be questioned. They find the transition from university to later Christian life very difficult; the apparent deadness of much parochial life is a tragic counter-blast to the warmth of the student fellowship.

Also students should not be so "religious" that their studies suffer. The most fervent religious society of my acquaintance was noted also for the low level of the members' degrees. If a student becomes competent in his field, worships in the Body of Christ and shows by holiness of life the source of his strength, then he is following his vocation. It will be a more lonely path, but one which is lived right at the heart of life and thus working to redeem society.

Many students gather together for Bible study and discussion, but frequently this sinks to the level of mere platitudes. Truth is not spoken in case it offends; whereas we should always speak the truth in love—charity is not some type of suppressed indecision. Questions discussed are not those being asked, the roots of a problem are not dug up, snap answers are sought. Discussion should more often take place with unbelievers, for it is only when our beliefs are challenged that we rise to defend them.

The normal pattern of student worship should be the gathering together of all Christian students in the context of parochial life, even though there will be practical difficulties for those living on a university site. Witness must be translated to the department where a common discipline unites: a Christian economist speaking to a fellow-economist has a bond which a Christian chemist has not. Within a hall or college, geographical units, that is, blocks, corridors, etc., should be seen as places of witness and friendships built up with those who scoff at the faith. No attempt must be made to force spiritual conversations: these will come when the source of our strength is observed. The individual's prayer-life must be developed, so that the necessary strength is provided from a relationship of love between Creator and created. Within such places links for prayer between Christians of various traditions could be established: such a unity would further oecumenical relations far better than superficial chatting. Study with a book, or an attempt to answer unbelievers' questions, are always more profitable than most society-type meetings. Christian thinkers and scholars should lecture on problems common to all students and these would partially replace traditional ideas of talking to the converted. I remember the deep impact upon many students of a series of lectures on existentialism by a Christian philosopher. Obviously these cells would need some assistance and spiritual oversight, which could be supplied by the chaplain of the university or college.

My plea, therefore, is for a re-interpretation of the Body of Christ for the student world, that young Christians may not look inward into a university society but as members of the redeemed society look outwards to the world.

WILLIAM TEMPLE ASSOCIATION

In the belief that there is a great need today for constructive thought on the problems of our age in the light of the Christian faith, the William Temple Association has decided to concentrate mainly on work in study groups. Two groups are being formed initially (to meet fortnightly, starting on October 18th); the subject of the first will be *The Welfare State and Individual Responsibility*, and the subject of the second *The English Sunday* (an inquiry into the theological, legal, historical, and social backgrounds). There will also be fortnightly Bible Study meetings on the Epistle to the Ephesians, beginning on October 13th, and the Autumn programme will open with a service and social meeting on October 5th.

Further details may be obtained from the Secretary, Liddon House, 24 South Audley Street, W.1.

For those interested in the Liturgical Movement and Church Music

One-day School on

MUSIC AND THE LITURGY

SATURDAY, 22nd OCTOBER, 1960

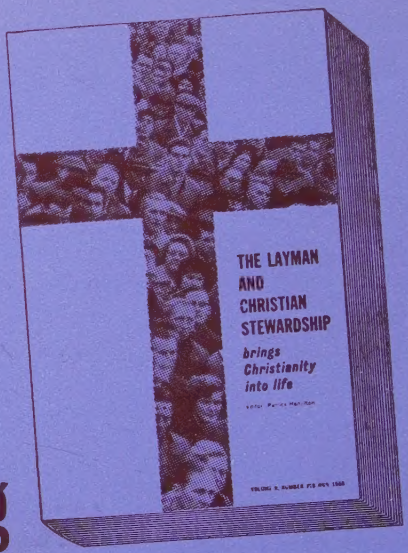
AT ALL SAINTS', CHILDS HILL, LONDON, N.W.2

10.30	Celebration of the Holy Eucharist.
11.30	Talk by the Rev. G. B. Timms, M.A., Vicar of St. Mary's, Primrose Hill, followed by Discussion.
1.00	Buffet Lunch.
2.30	Talk by Mr. Michael Fleming, B.A., F.R.C.O., Organist and Choirmaster at All Saints', Margaret Street, followed by Discussion.
4.00	Tea.
5.00	Evening Prayer will be sung.

Fee 10/- **Lunch 3/-** **Tea 2/-**

Those wishing to attend are requested to send the Fee of 10/– as soon as possible, and not later than 17th October to C. G. Holland, Esq., 14 Ebbslfeet Road, Cricklewood, N.W.2., and if they require lunch and/or tea to enclose appropriate amount with the fee.

Four-star recommendations of hospitable but uncloying London churches were promised last month. High on the list must go St. Simon Zelotes, Lennox Gardens. It is one of the few churches we know which adheres with a lively faith to the ordinances of the Book of Common Prayer. Apart from its daily morning and evening prayer, when a circle of twenty or more provide between them a regular half dozen worshippers, who chat friendlily and with concern for their flat-ridden parish on the porch step afterwards, there is also a service of Holy Communion practically every morning. Until very recently, when he moved across the river, you would often find it taken by one of the parishioners, the Bishop of Southwark, who of course duly prayed for Henry (next word slurred—our? . . . your?) bishop. This is preferable to his self-conscious practice in his diocese of "me, Mervyn, your bishop". In his diocese St. Philip's, Kennington Road, though it has lost its spire, is wideawake early and full of straight-forward vitality. Surprising maybe, to those who dismiss smart churches, St. Peter's, Eaton Square, allows you to pray in peace, and people do. So too does St. Saviour's, Pimlico, a forlorn and seedy spike-shop perhaps at first sight, but helpfully unaggressive and open. This paragraph may read as revoltingly patronising; it is not meant so, but only to reflect our concern for churches to be decently available; so the most honourable mention of all should still go to St. Martin's in the Fields. "God may not be there in the tabernacle," mused Anglo-Catholic young Dick Shepperd, considering the offered benefice, "but if his poor can be sheltered in the crypt that is what matters."



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